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Language learning and language teaching are discussed in terms of H.E. Palmer's theory that language can be divided into primary matter (units learned by heart integrally) and secondary matter (units built up or derived by the pupil from primary matter). Excerpts from the "Nuffield German Teaching Materials" are used to illustrate how audiovisual techniques can increase secondary school students' ability to recombine primary matter when confronted with new situations. A presentation of the design and aims of the Nuffield Foundation Foreign Language Teaching Materials Project concludes the article. (JH)

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TEACHING MEANING

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L'article part de l'hypothèse de H. E. Palmer que chaque énoncé, prononcé ou écrit par quelqu'un, a été ou bien appris comme une seule unité par cœur, ou bien a été composé d'unités plus petites qui, à leur tour, ont été apprises par cœur antérieurement. Les unités (propositions, dialogues) apprises en bloc sont selon la terminologie de Palmer de la matière première *('primary matter')*; les unités qui n'ont pas été apprises ainsi sont appelées matière secondaire *('secondary matter')*.

Le problème de l'enseignement des langues étrangères peut être résumé comme ceci: quelle est la meilleure méthode d'apprendre à un élève de produire de nouvelles unités de langue *('secondary matter')* à partir de matériaux déjà appris par cœur *('primary matter')*? Les *Nuffield German Teaching Materials* essaient de préparer:

1) une méthode d'apprendre à refaire les unités déjà apprises par cœur en les adaptant à des situations nouvelles;

et

2) des matériaux pédagogiques permettant au professeur de développer cette capacité chez ses élèves.

Ces buts on les atteint le mieux à l'aide de dialogues appropriés combinés avec des matériaux visuels convenables. On complète ainsi les importants exercices grammaticaux du laboratoire de langue avec leurs suites de *stimulus–réponse–correction–renforcement* en y ajoutant des exercices où une situation évoquée par une image provoque les énoncés linguistiques en cause et, par conséquent, serve de *stimulus*. Cette méthode est expliquée en détail à l'aide de dialogues en allemand.

Une présentation de la construction et des buts du *Nuffield Foundation Foreign Languages Teaching Materials Project* termine l'article.

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Der Artikel geht von H. E. Palmers Hypothese aus, daß jeder von irgendeiner Person gesprochene oder geschriebene Satz entweder einmal als Ganzes auswendig gelernt oder aus kleineren Einheiten zusammengesetzt wurde, von denen jede für sich einmal auswendig gelernt worden ist. Die als Ganzes gelernten sprachlichen Einheiten (Sätze, Dialoge) werden mit Palmer als *primary matter* bezeichnet, die sprachlichen Einheiten, deren Elemente nicht als Ganzes gelernt wurden, heißen *secondary matter*.

Das Problem des Fremdsprachenunterrichts ist nun, wie der Lernende am besten befähigt wird, neue sprachliche Einheiten (*secondary matter*) aus auswendig gelerntem Sprachmaterial (*primary matter*) zu erzeugen.

Die *Nuffield German Teaching Materials* versuchen bereitzustellen:

1) eine Methodik, die die Fertigkeit lehren soll, auswendig gelernte sprachliche Einheiten abzuwandeln, um neuen Situationen gerecht zu werden,

und

2) Lehrmaterial, das dem Sprachlehrer hilft, diese Fertigkeit bei seinen Schülern zu entwickeln.

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Diese Ziele sollen mit Hilfe von geeigneten Dialogen in Verbindung mit dazugehörigem Bildmaterial erreicht werden. Damit werden die ebenfalls wichtigen grammatischen Sprachlabordrills mit ihrer Abfolge von *stimulus–response–correction–reinforcement* durch Übungen ergänzt, in denen eine durch ein Bild angedeutete Situation die sprachlichen Äußerungen hervorrufen, also als *stimulus* dienen soll. Diese Methode wird an Hand von deutschen Dialogen erläutert.

Eine Darstellung über Aufbau und Ziele des *Nuffield Foundation Foreign Languages Teaching Materials Project* beschließt den Artikel.

0.1 The *language-learning* process begins when the student understands the meaning of a new foreign language utterance; it proceeds through various stages of manipulation and can be considered to be completed when the student is able to use the utterance at will in an appropriate foreign language situation.

The *language-teaching* process is consequently concerned with the teaching of meaning as the first and last stage in the process. The first stage is the teaching of the foreign language utterance in a context, the concepts of which are, to a large extent, shared with the native language.

Then, the pupil can practise using the utterance first in the one context, and later in a variety of contexts to which it may be appropriate.

The utterance will then take its place in the perhaps limited system of foreign language concepts which the pupil is expected to master during his course of study.

0.2 It would be uneconomical to teach language utterances which could be used appropriately only in a single foreign language situation. If, therefore, course compilers select 'useful' language items which may be uttered in a number of different situations, they assume a moral obligation to attempt to teach students how to produce acceptable language in a number of these situations.

Situations in which one can appropriately say: "Waiter! I would like a Rüdesheimer Roseneck Trockenbeerenauslese '59" probably occur with relative infrequency in the lives of most language students, even those who learn German. If, however, the ability to utter such a sentence is linked to 1) the skill of combining other language elements within its structure in order to produce new utterances and 2) the skill of producing such constructions when appropriate, the 'usefulness' of the original sentence will not be greatly diminished.

0.3 H. E. Palmer[1]) has a metaphor for describing how the foreign language student constructs such new utterances, though he speaks only about the manipulative side of the process: "... every sentence ever uttered or written by anybody has either been learnt by heart in its entirety or else has been composed (consciously or subconsciously) from smaller units, each of which must at one time have been learnt by heart. We may term *primary matter* all units learnt by heart integrally, and *secondary matter* all units built up or derived by the pupil from primary matter."

An example of how such construction of 'secondary matter' might be taught follows. It should be assumed that paragraphs A and B occur in separate units of a teaching course for English as a foreign language and that they have been learnt by heart in the course of instruction.

A.

Shopkeeper: Good morning madam.
What would you like?
Lady: Have you got any carrots?
Shopkeeper: Yes.
Lady: *I would like* two pounds, please.
And *I would like* a pound of onions as well.
Shopkeeper: A pound of onions.
Anything else for you today?
Lady: Yes, *I would like* four pounds of potatoes.
That's all, thank you.

B.

First station porter: *What's* that over there?
Second " " A packet of cigarettes.
First " " Are there any inside?
Second " " No, *it's* empty.
First " " *Here's* a box of matches.
Second " " No luck.
It's empty too.

0.4 Let us suppose that a pupil has memorised the above texts as part of his programme: Text 'A' is used by the teacher for exemplifying the structure: "I would like" and Text 'B', the English fashion of abreviating the word 'is'. If he, a foreigner in England, wants to buy some cigarettes, he has nevertheless at his disposal the language elements with which to express his needs, provided he is

able to combine elements from both texts and thus create 'secondary matter':

I would like a packet of cigarettes.
I would like a box of matches.

0.5 Taken in isolation, this skill of recombination is no more than an 'organisational skill' (Corder)[2]) functioning in a vacuum. Substitution and transformation drills, which form the bulk of many new language courses, frequently function in the same vacuum e.g. Person Number Substitution Drill:

Stimulus: Er singt schön!
Response: Sie singen schön!

This is fine, but what happens when the student goes to the Bayreuth festival with a German friend? He will only be able to say to his friend: "Sie singen schön!" if his friend first says to him: "Er singt schön!"

0.6 Language is behaviour and therefore language laboratory drills play an important rôle in achieving the fluency which is a characteristic of linguistic behaviour. However, a more exact definition of language would be to say that it is "creative behaviour in an authentic situation." It is, therefore, the fluent and creative use of language which characterises the successful student and the successful method of teaching.

0.7 Foreign language students cannot effectively create language in a void. Once a meaningful context has been established in the classroom, then the creation of appropriate language may proceed. These are big words, but speech, as B. L. Whorf observed, "is the best show Man puts on." What follows describes the very modest beginnings of an experiment to blend the skill of recon bination with elementary atten pts to ensure that these con binations are meaningful.

1.1 The Nuffield German Teaching Materials[3]) attempt to provide:

a) a methodology for teaching the skill of recon bination and variation of men orised units of language and
b) teaching materials to help the classroom teacher to develop this skill with his pupils.

1.2 The pre-requisites for producing materials with this purpose in mind are: a) the language items presented to the pupil should be as authentic as possible but without the hesitations, repetitions and discontinuity of true speech, b) pupils should have reached the stage of fluently manipulating the language as it is first presented before being asked to use it to produce original speech, c) initial presentation of language should be in meaningful and interesting contexts and pupils should be required to produce original speech only in such meaningful contexts.

1.3 Nuffield German Teaching Materials attempt to fulfil these pre-requisites, a) by submitting texts to a panel of Native Speakers resident throughout German-speaking areas, though choice of language items depends in the last resort on pedagogical criteria, b) by using a full range of classroom and language laboratory techniques to develop fluency, and c) by contextualising language items as realistically as possible by exploiting a mixture of drawn and photographed visuals described more fully below.

2.1 Nuffield German Teaching Materials are prepared for Secondary School pupils of average ability aged 11–13 years. In providing teaching aids to stimulate spontaneous response to situations requiring the skill of recombination and variation, therefore, we must take account of the fact that many pupils will come from not very highly privileged families and will not be highly articulate.

2.2 This being the case, recombination in the early stages is done *for* the pupil. Here is an example: Extract from first presentation of language *(Vorstellung)*. (Semanticisation at this stage is by visual on film strip, one picture per phrase, and native German voices on tape.)

Lieselotte:	Was ist denn das dort drüben?
Hans:	Das ist das Gasthaus Bauer.
	Dort wohnt die Familie Bauer.
	Schau Lieselotte!
	Das ist der Turm,
	und dahinter der Marktplatz.
Lieselotte:	Oh, der ist aber schön!

After the Teaching Point of the unit has been practised by means of repetition, question and answer and language laboratory drills, but without fixing the habit by too much overlearning to the extent of inhibiting flexibility, the recombination is presented under the title: '*Unterhaltung.*'

Here is *Unterhaltung* 2 from the same unit:

Lieselotte:	Das Haus / dort drüben / ist schön!
Hans:	Dort wohnt / mein Freund Karl.
Lieselotte:	Und was ist das / dahinter?
Hans:	Das ist der Turm.
Lieselotte:	Oh, der ist aber schön!

(The elements of the recombination are indicated by oblique strokes. The phrase: "mein Freund Karl" comes from the previous unit.)

2.3 Pupils are required to learn the *Unterhaltung* by heart and act it in class using any appropriate properties and costumes available.

2.4 Pupils who make their own minor variations e. g.
Dort wohnt mein Freund *Fritz.*
Oh, der ist aber *nicht* schön!
are praised, and the teacher tries to create a permissive atmosphere where pupils feel free to communicate with each other in German and are able to make their contribution to the variation of the dialogue without fear of rebuke.

3.1 Language laboratory drills with their pattern of stimulus–response–correction–reinforcement, are able to develop in the pupil an automatic response to a given linguistic stimulus–learning in the Skinnerian sense. Language laboratory stimuli, however, are rarely of the sort which would occur in an authentic conversation. Moreover, the language laboratory drill is unable to confront the pupil with the very different 'situational' stimulus which, in the foreign country, is just as often the source of utterance. For example, feeling thirsty is the stimulus to saying: "Bring me a beer, please." Wanting to go to Munich is the stimulus to saying: "A second class single to Munich, please". Seeing the Frauenkirche is the stimulus to saying: "That is really beautiful!"

3.2 The *Unterhaltungen* of the Nuffield German Teaching Materials attempt to provide this stimulus. The presentation text of the unit attempts to give pupils suitable, authentic German utterances which can be recombined and varied in order to create 'secondary matter' i.e. new bits of language. Language laboratory drills are used as far as they are suitable. The *Unterhaltungen* attempt to provide authentic 'situational' stimuli as described above, that is to say, to counterfeit as far as possible in the classroom the authentic stimulus of being in Germany.

3.3 This teaching process is in two stages:

3.4 Pupils learning German with Nuffield materials are used to identifying with drawn characters on film strip visuals and to saying what these characters say. In learning by heart the *Unterhaltung* containing recombined elements of language, this ability is made use of. Pupils are shown a drawn visual on the film strip of one or more familiar characters making an utterance appropriate to the situation portrayed and simultaneously they hear the recorded text of the *Unterhaltung* on tape in a paused version. For example:

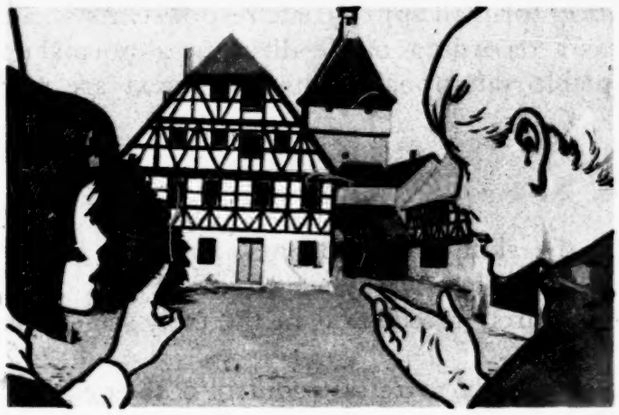

Fig.1

Lieselotte: Das Haus dort drüben ist schön! (pause)
Hans: Dort wohnt mein Freund Karl. (pause)
Lieselotte: Und was ist das dahinter? (pause)
Hans: Das ist der Turm. (pause)
Lieselotte: Oh, der ist aber schön!

3.5 When the *Unterhaltung* has been learnt by heart, pupils are required to act it. During this stage, a photographed colour transparency on the film strip is shown.

Fig. 2

It corresponds exactly to the drawn visual and serves as a 'situational' stimulus of the kind referred to in 3.1. In other words, it brings into the classroom an authentic situation to which the words of the *Unterhaltung* form an appropriate response. As an additional aid, the teacher has a recording of the dialogue at normal speed without pauses. Acceptable variations to the given text are praised by the teacher.

4.1 Since the skill of creating new language out of memorised elements is by no means easily acquired, the task of recombination and variation is purely mechanical in the early stages i. e. learning by heart.

The aim is gradually to release control of the process and emancipate the pupils from a learned text. This is attempted for the first time towards the end of the first year in the following two ways:

4.2 *Unterhaltungen* are composed which reach no conclusion, which are left in mid air, thus inviting the pupils to continue. Here is an example:

Zwei Bergsteiger im Schneesturm.

1. Ich bin aber hungrig!
2. Ja, ich auch!
1. Was können wir essen?
2. Nichts. Wir haben nichts zu essen.
1. Ich bin auch durstig.
   Wo ist dein Wasserkanister?
2. Ich habe keinen Wasserkanister.
1. Was machen wir jetzt?

4.3 Visual B, the photographed visual whose function is to provide the situational stimulus, is allowed to become increasingly ambiguous. Thus, some pupils in whom the skill of recombination is well-developed may spontaneously create a few lines of dialogue which, although appropriate to the visual stimulus, bear no relation to the text of the given *Unterhaltung*. Here is an example. An *Unterhaltung* has been written incorporating the receipt of a telegram. When the situational stimulus is shown, in this case a reproduction of a German telegram form, some pupils may invent an entirely different dialogue to the one offered.

5.1 The ultimate aim of such techniques is, of course, to provide situational stimuli, to which pupils are able to respond without first being primed by a text already recombined by the course compiler. If this stage can be reached, it would go a long way towards reproducing the effect of visiting the foreign country. While waiting for such techniques to be developed, some criteria governing the selection and production of such stimuli may be discerned.

5.2 Stimuli to conversation should be sufficiently exact to guide the pupil into situations for which he has enough linguistic material to allow him to respond and at the same time sufficiently ambiguous to allow several possible variant conversations.

5.3 Much thought is needed to find out how to put pupils into a situation in which an appropriate linguistic response is required. Mimed situations presented by film or television might be part of the solution as might unfinished situations defined in words on tape.

5.4 So far, only the first steps have been taken.

6.1 The Nuffield Foundation Foreign Languages Teaching Materials Project was established in October 1963, and now comprises the following sections:

Headquarters, Research and Publications;
Child Language Survey;
Language Teaching Information Centre;
Tape recording, Editing and Copying Studios;
French;
Spanish;
Russian;
German.

The Headquarters and French sections are housed in the University of Leeds and the German section in the University of York. The Child Language Survey, the Language Centre, the Recording Studios, the Spanish and Russian sections are also in Leeds in premises provided by the City's Education Committee.

The whole Project is under the direction of the Organiser, Mr. A. Spicer, who is on secondment from the University of Leeds. Each of the language sections is staffed by a team headed by an Associate Organiser. The team members include teachers, native speakers and artists. The Child Language Survey is headed by a Research Fellow, and a Sound Engineer is in charge of the Recording Studios and a full-time Information Officer is in charge of the Language Centre.

6.2 The main aim of the Project is to encourage the use and development of up to date foreign language teaching materials and methods. The Project hopes to achieve this aim by producing Introductory Audio-Visual Language Courses, by undertaking research and by publishing up to date information.

The emphasis is on language as a means of communication and the first stage of each course is purely oral: reading, writing and composition are introduced in that order in later stages. In the case of French, the age range concerned is 8 to 16 and the other languages 11 to 16.

6.3 The German Section of the Project was established in the Language Teaching Centre at York University in September 1965. The members of the team consist of practising teachers seconded for

the purpose of producing an Introductory Audio-Visual German Course for the age group 11–16. They are assisted by artists whose task it is to produce the visual element of the course.

6.4 The German Section has the following aims:

- To teach pupils to speak German rather than to teach them about it.
- To provide a simple introduction to the customs, daily life and institutions of German-speaking countries and German-speaking people.
- To widen the general educational experience of the pupils.
- To produce course material that is suitable for use with pupils of average, as well as high ability.

6.5 Teaching points are presented in a systematic manner, advancing gradually and step by step, endeavouring wherever possible to introduce new sentence patterns in a context of known vocabulary and new vocabulary in association with familiar patterns. The language is introduced and practised in a meaningful context using characters and situations relevant to the interest of the pupils concerned. The linguistic skills are introduced in the following order: hearing, speaking, reading and writing.

6.6 The draft material at present being produced includes pupils' texts and comprehensive teachers' guides. A wide range of audio-visual aids, including filmstrips and tape-recordings for classroom and Language Laboratory made by native speakers, is provided to give the teacher as much assistance as possible to enable him to teach economically, effectively, and interestingly.

Other integral course components are: –

Wall maps of Germany.

Flash cards to assist in introducing vocabulary and practising structures.

Coloured slides to help make Germany visually familiar and provide background cultural information.

Readers based on orally mastered structures will be introduced as part of the second year's materials.

6.7 The course materials are divided into units. It is expected that each year's materials will comprise some 20 units.

Conventional units of the course materials offer teachers audio-visual aids for presenting, consolidating, practising, and stimulating the active use of language. Periodical revision units offer teachers audio-visual aids for assessing pupils' progress and testing the degree to which they can understand and produce speech.

All units contain a summary of the grammar and vocabulary introduced, background cultural information about Germany, and either games, songs or rhymes to promote pleasurable use of language.

6.8 The draft version of the course is being tested in some 35 schools in Britain. The teachers who use the materials maintain close and regular contact with the writing team and their comments and criticisms together with those of the supervisory committee are incorporated into the final draft which will then be handed over to the publishers.

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